

Lansburgh's Warehouse
410 8th St., NW
Washington
District of Columbia

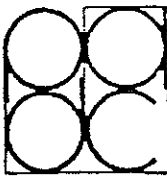
HABS No. DC-518

HABS
DC,
WASH,
279-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Building Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, DC 20013-7127



PENNSYLVANIA
AVENUE
DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION
425 13TH STREET, N.W.
WASHINGTON, DC 20004

GENERAL CONSULTANTS

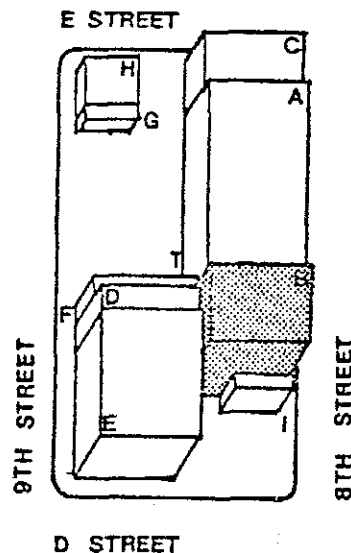
ANDERSON, NOTTER / MARIANI
GENERAL PRESERVATION & CONSERVATION CONSULTANT
DEVROUX & PURNELL
ASSOCIATE ARCHITECTS
DAVID MCLAREN, HART & ASSOCIATES
PRESERVATION & CONSERVATION CONSULTANT
MONK DUNSTONE ASSOCIATES
COST ESTIMATING CONSULTANT

HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM

BUILDING DOCUMENTATION

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Lansburgh's Warehouse
410 Eighth Street, NW
Lot 810



This documentation was produced for mitigation purposes by the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation. Additional documentation exists for Square 407, within which this structure stands. For photographs, historical, and descriptive data on Square 407, see HABS No. DC-516.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

This early Twentieth Century commercial establishment is situated on the east side of Square 407, on Ninth Street between D and E Streets. Occupying both original lots 17 and 18, it approaches rectangular dimensions of 77 feet by 100 feet and stands approximately 75 feet tall. Presently, the building is used by the National Archives as a storage facility, where they partially occupy the upper four floors. Private businesses utilize the first two floors as a reserve of stock and supplies.

Constructed in 1907, this building served as a livery during the early 1900's. Evidence in the structural fabric supports the assumption that the southern third of the structure pre-dated the Twentieth Century construction to the north. However, much of the older structure was altered during this expansion, retaining only the brick enclosure at the south.

Designed in a manner combining classical and abstracted Second Empire elements, this six-story brick structure lacks intricate embellishments. Faced entirely of brick, its facade is marked by full height pilaster masses which divide the facade into its three-bay configuration. The organization of the fenestration system within these slightly recessed sections is in a 3-4-3 rhythm. Segmentally-arched windows are existent on the second through fourth floors, while the fifth floor is punctuated with round-arched windows. There is a simple impost course at the springline of the fifth floor arches. All windows are double-hung with a six/six pane configuration, wood-framed, with stone sills. An overhanging metal cornice on modillions separates the classically inspired mass from the French-influenced, tiled mansard roof. Six irregularly spaced dormer windows capped with classical triangular pediments embellish the simple mansard. Stone pilasters with a recessed panel shaft decoration support the dormer gables, thereby framing windows with the same pane configuration as those below.

At the building base dual loading docks open directly onto the street. Two wood folding doors, each one bay wide, flank a plywood-clad storefront on the ground floor. The storefront still features some classical trim, probably from 1908 alterations, (Building Permit No. 708, 8-24-1908). A simple classical metal cornice spans the openings on this level.

Very little fenestration is expressed on both north and south brick-faced elevations, while an abundance of metal hopper windows occur in the rear facade. An irregular configuration of the building out-

line along this west property line creates a pocket of vacant space with dimensions of 10 feet by 25 feet at the southwest corner of lot no. 17. Except for a brick party wall on lot no. 17, the rear of the structure is of reinforced concrete walls.

Inside, very few subdivisions have been created, therefore maintaining large open spaces. A concrete block partition has been constructed running north-south at the center of the first floor creating a secured storage area in the rear of the building. Some bays on the upper floors, south side, have been enclosed with dry-wall partitions creating subordinate storage spaces. There are two elevator shafts, each one bay square. One is skylighted, operable, and features an open freight cage with wooden platform. It is located in the center-middle bay. The other is inoperable and is situated at the south-middle bay. They are all enclosed in structural clay tile. Both elevators apparently date from 1917, (Building Permit No. 4976, 5-16-1917).

The interior faces of the east and south elevations and the southern third of the rear wall are exposed brick. The remaining walls are of reinforced concrete, also exposed on the interior.

There is a concrete stair to the south running the full height of the building. A secondary dog-leg concrete staircase joins the fifth and sixth floors along the north party wall.

There is clear evidence that the two westernmost bays, also along the north party walls once were open and featured a system of concrete ramps interconnecting all floors. Additional remnants from the period when the building functioned as a livery are metal hitching rings attached to the walls on the northeast portion of the fourth floor. There are also sections of scored concrete flooring which aided in the prevention of slipping. Floors still sloping to drains reflect the original need for washing of the stalls.

Steel reinforced concrete columns, piers and walls, with flat concrete slabs create the structural system. All floor levels in the south third of the structure are significantly higher than those to the north, requiring the use of ramps to join the two sections.

At the sixth floor the mansard structure is also reinforced concrete, as is the sloping roof slab. The configuration of the dormers is expressed in concrete on the inside. Skylights perforate the roof at each structural bay except at the southeast corner and at the center. They are all framed in metal.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

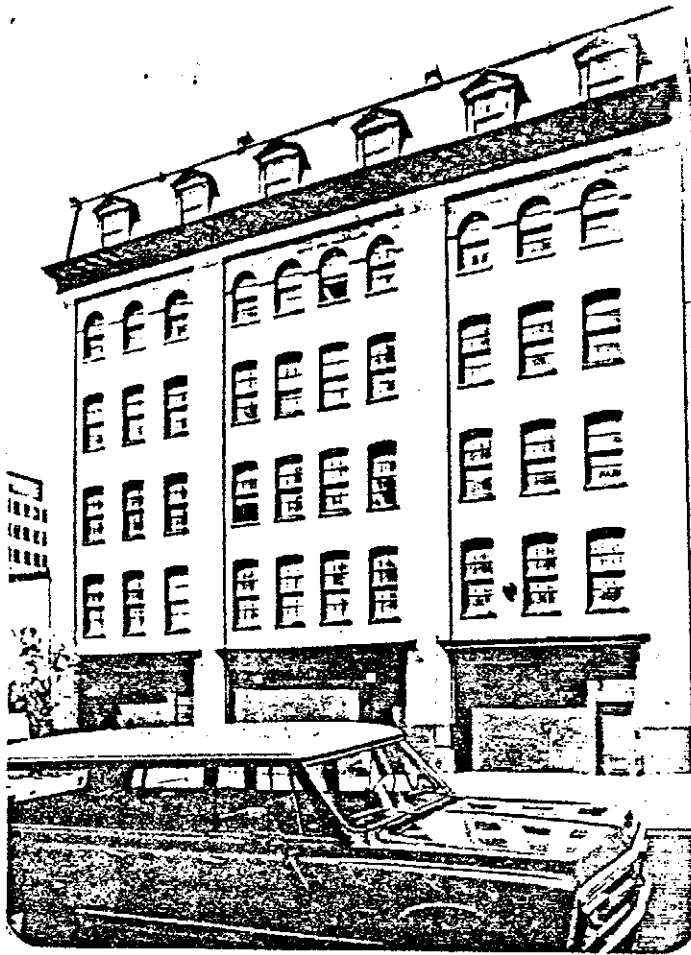
As a representative of this specific building type, these Eighth Street high-rise stables constitute a considerable documentary contribution to the history of both the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation area and downtown Washington. Plat maps show uninterrupted use of this site as a livery from at least 1860. Built in 1907 to the design of Harry Blake (J. Dill, Contractor, Building Permit No. 4096, 6-15-1907) the building was intended to replace its smaller predecessor. The stables reached quick functional obsolescence with the accelerated expansion of motor vehicle usage. In spite of its subsequent changes in function, a considerable number of elements still remain to testify its originally intended use.

The strictly functional purpose of the building in no way diminished the dignity of the Eighth Street facade, which though simple, bears evidence of an architectural intent to make a stylistic statement that would be compatible with the then-prevailing city-scape.

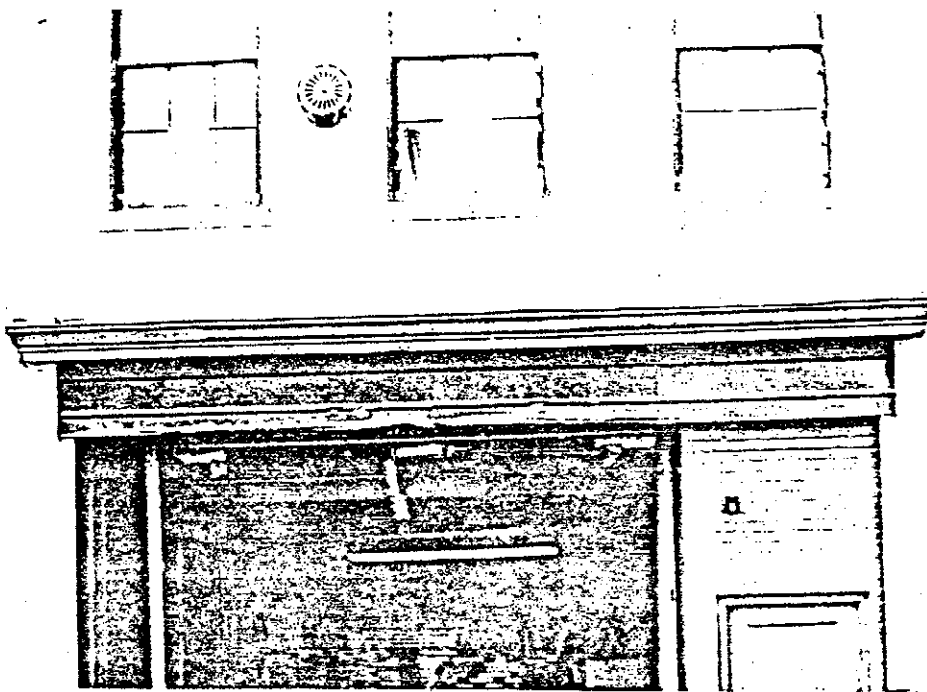
Considerably larger in height and width than its neighbors, both then and now, the bulk of the unpretentious facade is carefully articulated in order to achieve the more human scale usually associated with smaller structures. The breadth of the facade is subtly broken down into three distinctive bays by slightly projecting pilaster masses that rise uninterrupted the full building height. The potentially disruptive effect of the giant orders on the urban scale is effectively neutralized by a repetitive fenestration system which, in its abundance, becomes the facade's dominant motif. Thus, the residential dimensions of the typical window successfully recapture the intended human scale.

The scarce ornamentation that there is concentrates at the top, and consists of round arched windows, a simple impost course, the boldly oversailing cornice and the mansard, slightly unresolved in its irregularly-spaced dormers. The overall simplicity, its traditional facade materials and its pleasant scale make of this commercial structure a pleasant background building, well integrated in this traditional urban fabric of the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation District.

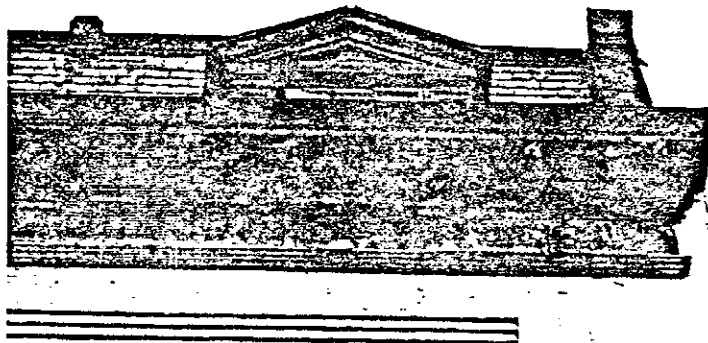
November 1980



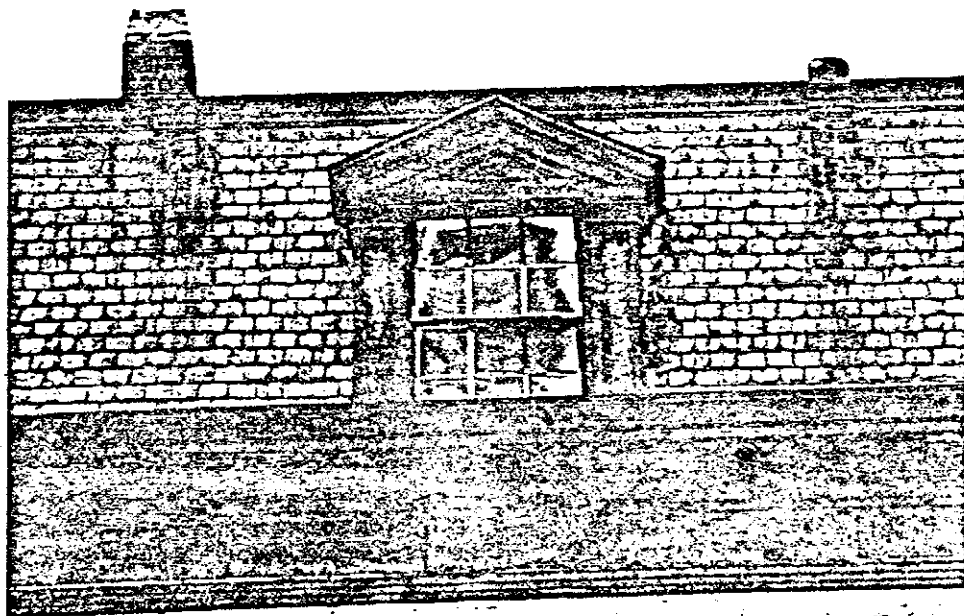
EIGHTH STREET FACADE



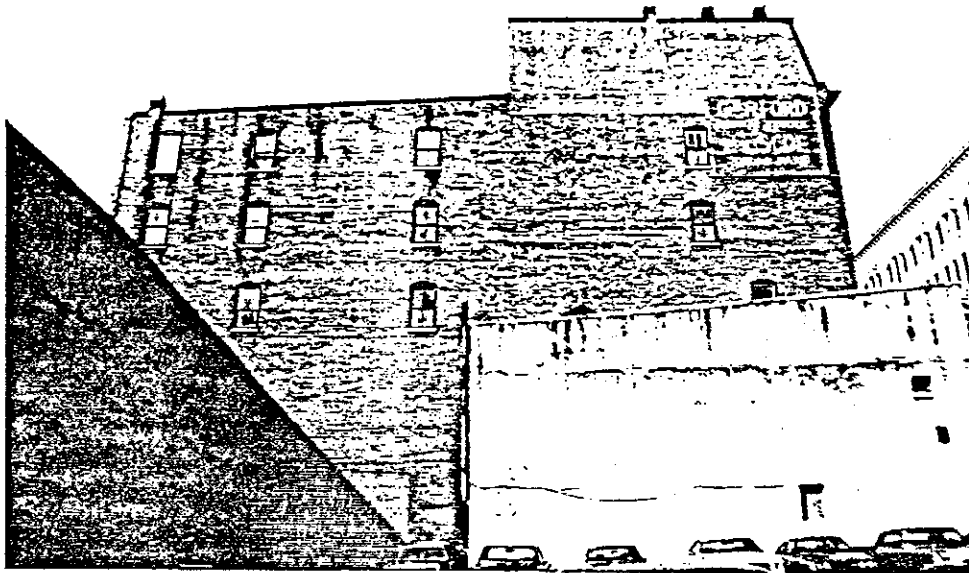
DETAIL OF CORNICE ABOVE STREET LEVEL ENTRY



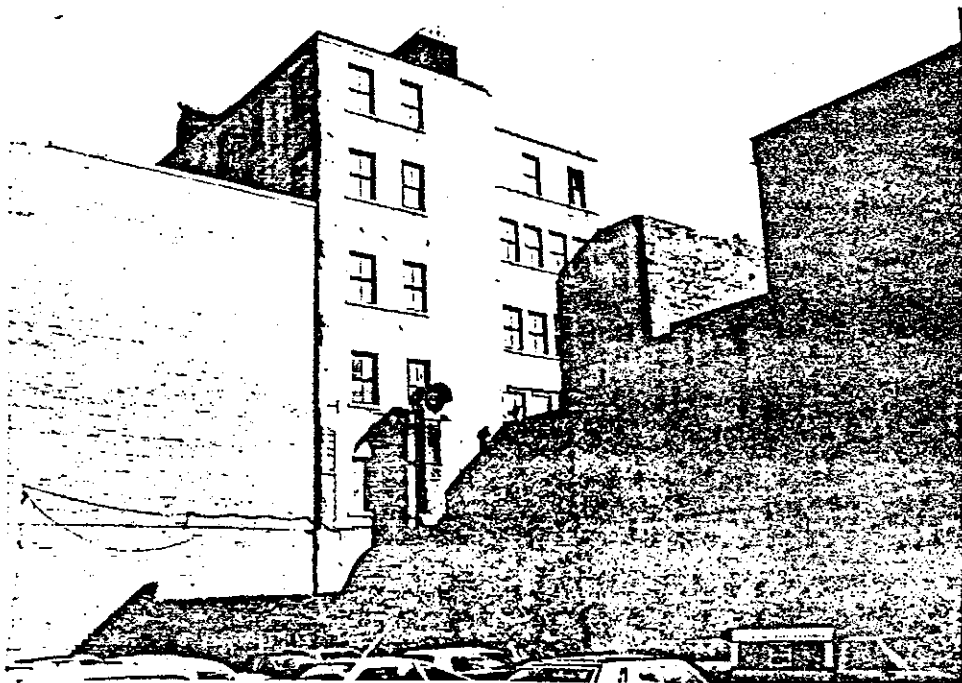
DETAIL OF MANSARD CORNICE



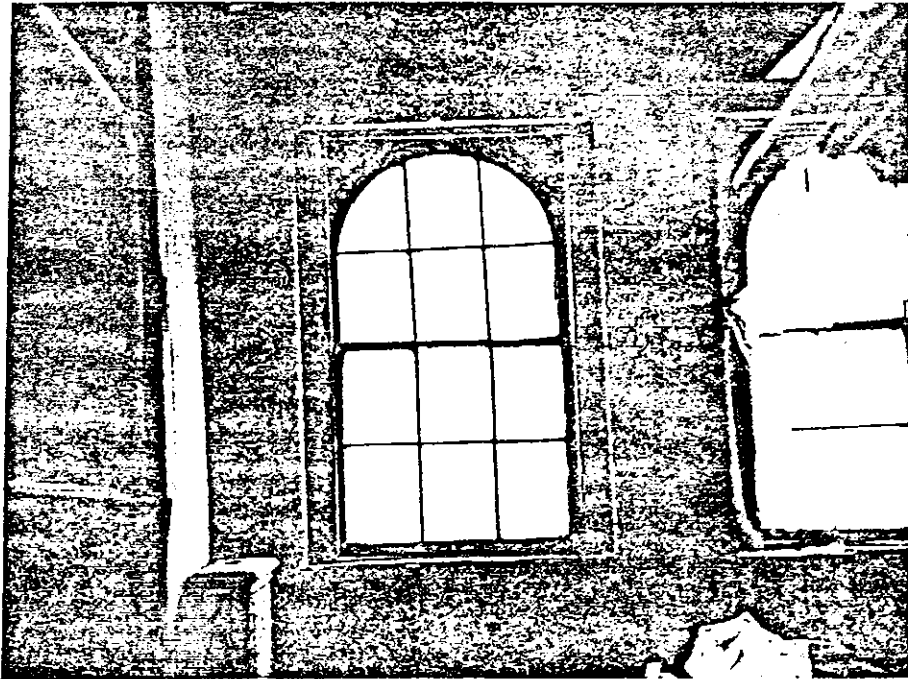
DETAIL OF MANSARD AND DORMER



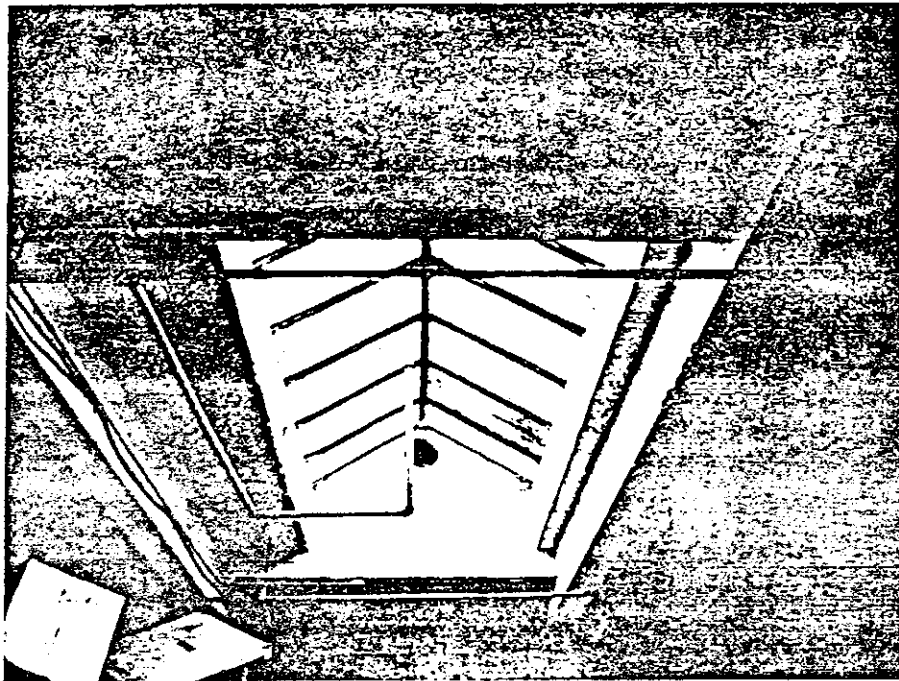
VIEW OF SOUTH WALL



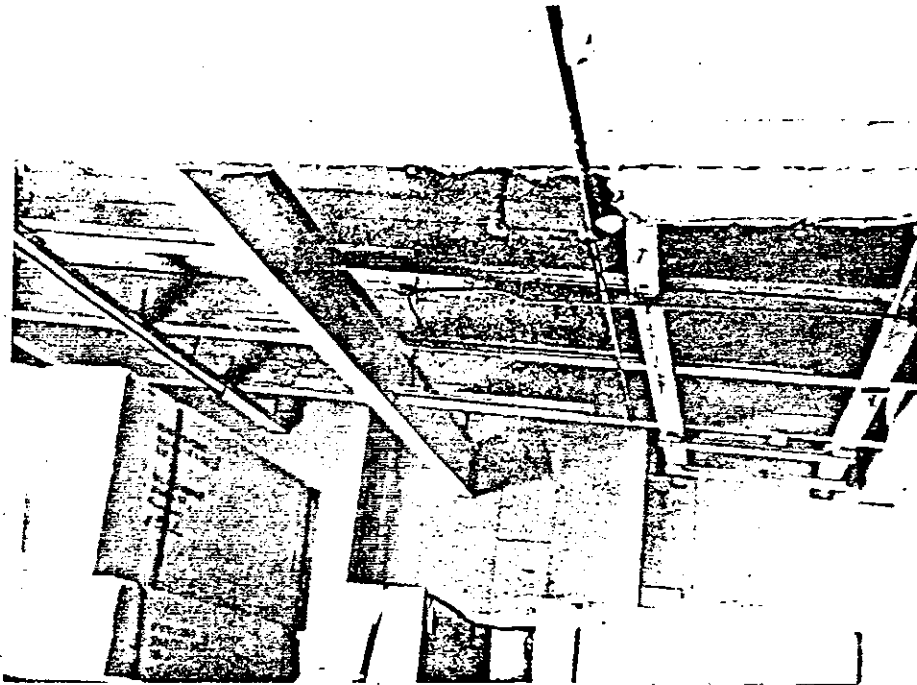
PARTIAL VIEW OF REAR OR WEST OF BUILDING



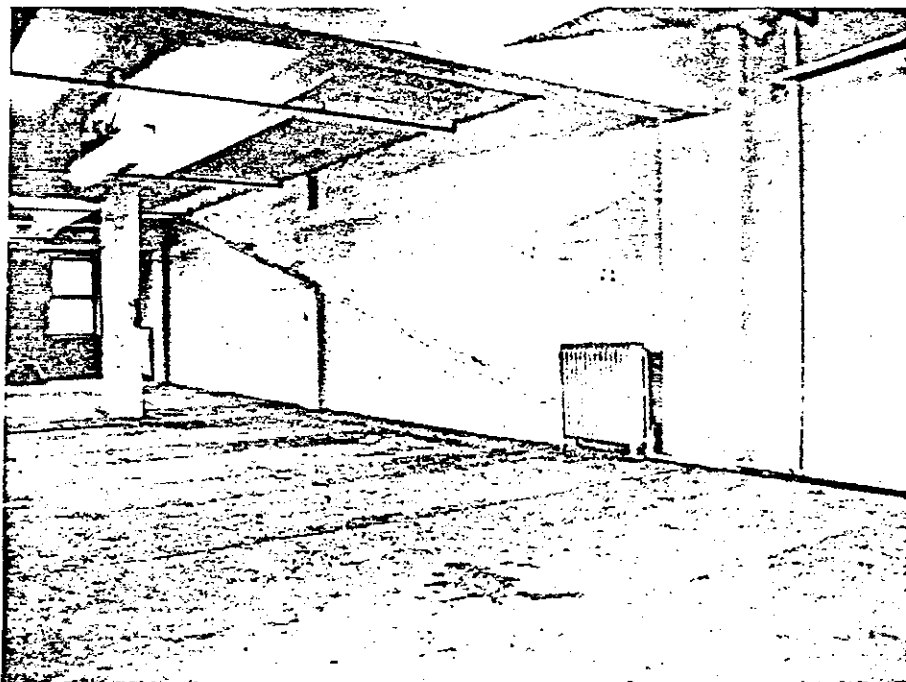
TIMBER FRAMING OF ROUND ARCHED WINDOWS ON FIFTH FLOOR



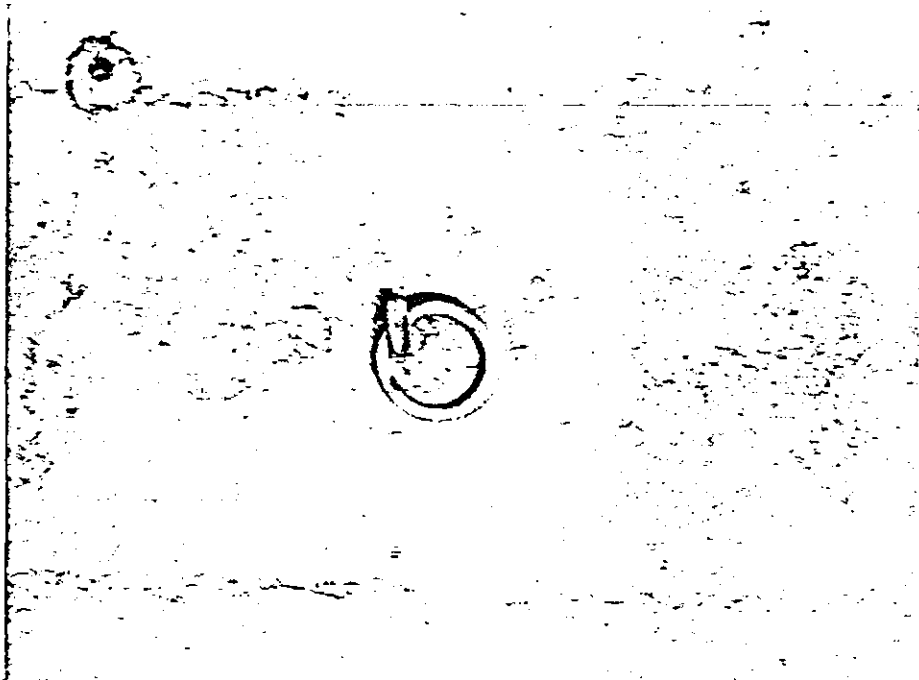
TYPICAL SKYLIGHT AT WEST BAY



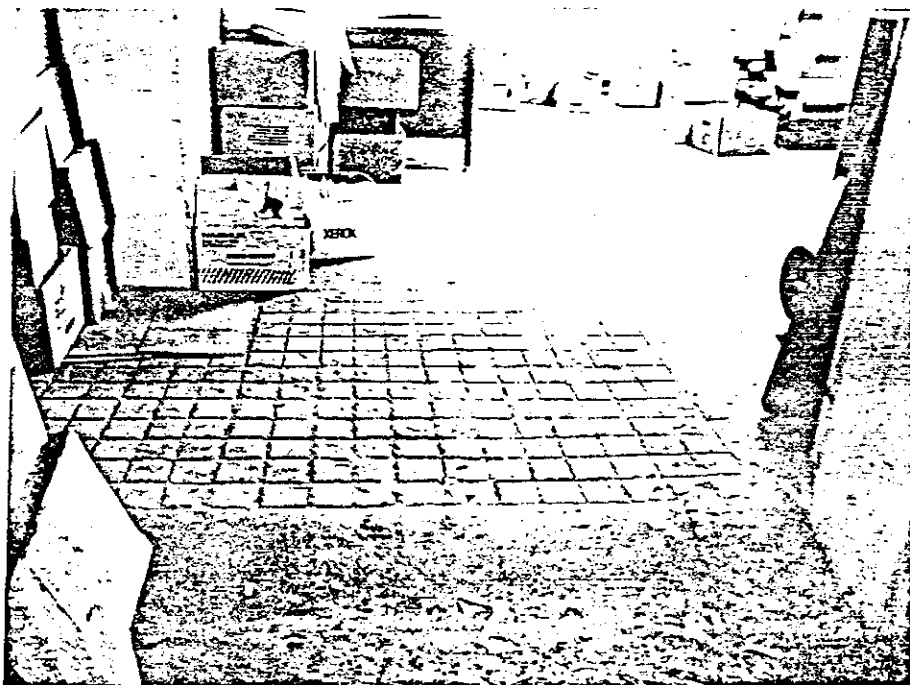
I-BEAM SUPPORTING SIXTH FLOOR OF SOUTHERN SECTION



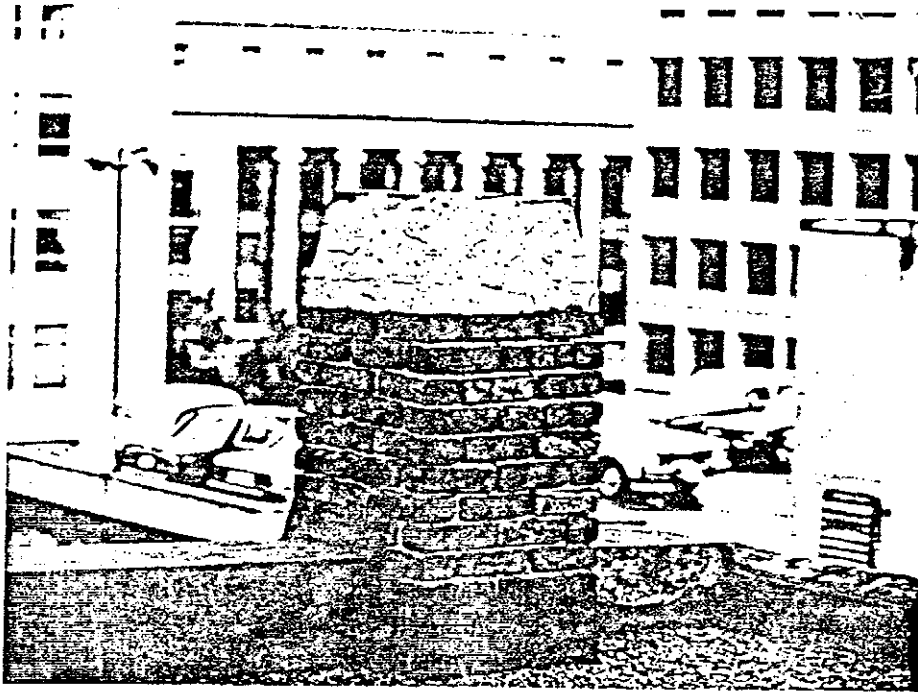
EVIDENCE OF RAMP JOINING FIRST THROUGH FOURTH FLOORS



SECTION OF NORTHERN WALL SHOWING METAL HITCHING RINGS



SECTION OF SCORED FLOOR SURFACES



BRICK CHIMNEY AT SOUTHWEST CORNER OF ROOF

Lot 18 North (Sublot 810)
410-416 8th Street

1859.....Jane Woodruff was assessed \$2,317.00 for her land.

1870.....The improvement value was \$500.00.

1873.....Robert H. Graham, carriage and wagon maker, was established at 410-416 8th Street until 1886.

1878/79

and

1883/84...Robert H. Graham's assessment was \$2,960.00 (lot).

1893/94...Graham's assessment increased to \$5,920.00.

1899/

1900.....Ernest Burgdorf was the new owner. The lot value dropped considerably to \$3,250.00, with a \$1,500.00 improvement value. Between 1876 and 1889 Burgdorf's "livery and sale stables" was listed at 418-420 8th Street; his address changed to 410-416 8th Street from 1890 to 1917.

1906*.....Building Permit #3128, May 17, 410 8th Street: Five-story brick warehouse. Building height: 65 ft. Brick facing. Foundation: Concrete. Owner: E. Burgdorf (carriage house). Contractor: H.G. & L.J. Dill.

Permission to locate a temporary hoisting engine, boiler, concrete mixer and shed on roadway in front of 410 8th Street to be removed in 60 days. (Building Permit #254, 7/24/1906; Owner: Ernest Burgdorf. Contractor: H.G. & L.J. Dill.)

1907

to

1981.....See Lot 17 for further information

*Probable "razing" permit though not indicated in the record.

Lot 17 (Sublot 810)
412-416 8th Street

The property at 412-416 8th Street measured 51' x 100' when platted in 1887 (Hopkins). It was joined with 410 8th Street (Lot 18, north) in 1907.

1819.....Lot 17 was owned by William McMurray.

1824.....McMurray was assessed \$760.00 (lot), and \$100.00 (improvements).

1829/33...\$810.00 (lot), and \$700.00 (improvements) were assessed to McMurray's heirs.

1840/43...The improvement value was \$1,013.00.

1859.....The title was transferred to Jane Woodruff. The lot value was \$4,559.00.

1870.....\$2,000.00 was the improvement value. No owner was listed.

1873
to

1886.....Robert H. Graham, carriage/wagon maker, was established at 410-416 8th Street (City Directories).

1878/79
and

1883/84...The lot value was \$5,826.00 to Robert H. Graham.

1893/94...Graham's holding had risen to \$11,652.00, with improvements totalling \$4,000.00.

1899/

1900.....Ernest Burgdorf was assessed \$5,200.00 (lot), \$2,500.00 (improvements). His livery and sale stables were listed at 418-420 8th Street (1876 to 1889), and 410-416 8th Street (1890 to 1917).

1907.....Building Permit #1002, September 21, to Ernest Burgdorf: Permission to build one six-story structure of brick, and reinforced concrete to be used as a livery (mansard roof). Architect/Contractor: Harry Black. Contractor: J. Dill.

Building Permit #3799, May 29, for 412-414 8th Street: Permission to locate a temporary storage shed on single walk in front of new building under construction. Owner: Ernest Burgdorf. Builder: Dill Bros.

1908.....Permission to erect one show window at 410-414 8th Street. Width: 14'-8". Projection: 3'. (Building Permit #708, 8/24/1908.)

1918

to

1923.....Capital City Garage Company had occupied the structure at 410-416 8th Street (City Directories, 1919 Baist plat map).

1925

to

1967.....410-416 8th Street was listed in the City Directories as occupied by Lansburgh's, used as a warehouse.

1981.....The building is used by the National Archives as a warehouse.

Lot 18 (Sublots 810, 811)
408-416 8th Street

The 1872 Bastert plat map reveals Lot 18 as "L-shaped", located in a lower, eastern quadrant of the square. By 1887 the property had been internally subdivided, east-west. A 1907 building permit indicated the construction of a structure at 410-412 8th Street, thus joining part of Lot 18 with Lot 17, to the north (Building Permit #1002, 9/21/1907).

1819.....William McMurray owned Lot 18.

1824.....McMurray's assessment was \$573.00 (lot), \$700.00 (improvements).

1829/33...The lot assessment increased to \$611.00.

1840/43...\$765.00 was McMurray's value of improvements.

After this record, Lot 18 has a northern (26' frontage) and southern (25' frontage) listing.

SOURCES

Baist Real Estate Atlas

Bastert and Enthoffer Plat Maps

Boyd's City Directories

District of Columbia Building Permits

District of Columbia General Assessment Records

District of Columbia Recorder of Deeds

District of Columbia Surveyor's Office Records

District of Columbia Tax Records

Hopkins Real Estate Atlas

Polk's City Directories

Property Map for Downtown Urban Renewal Area for District of Columbia Redevelopment
Land Agency

Sanborn Insurance Map